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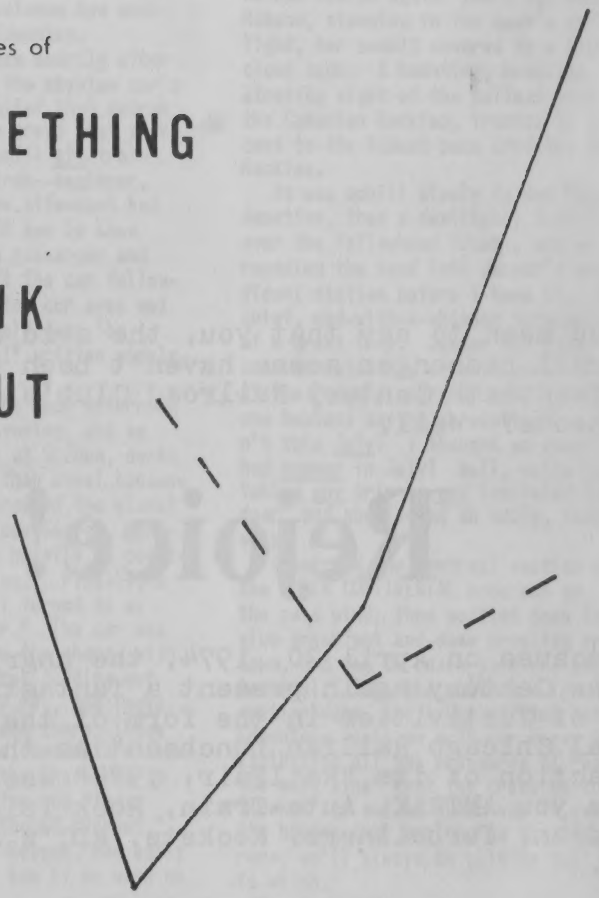

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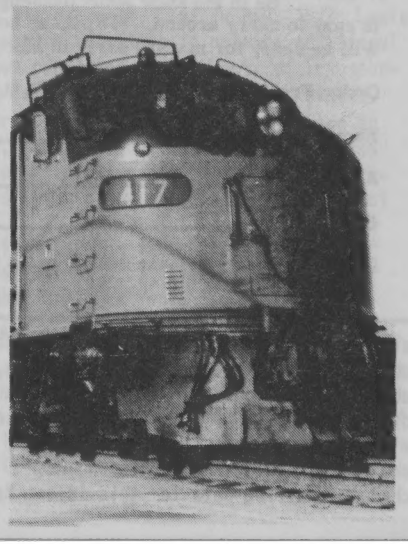

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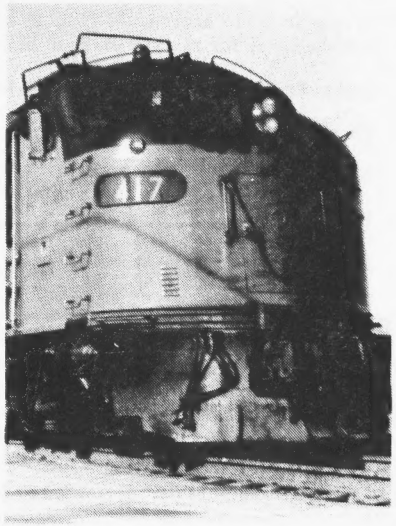

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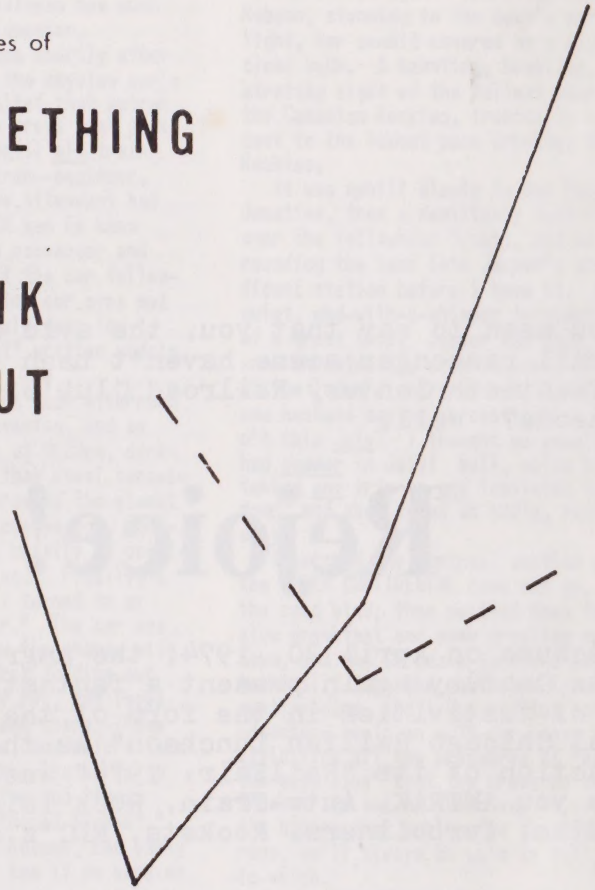

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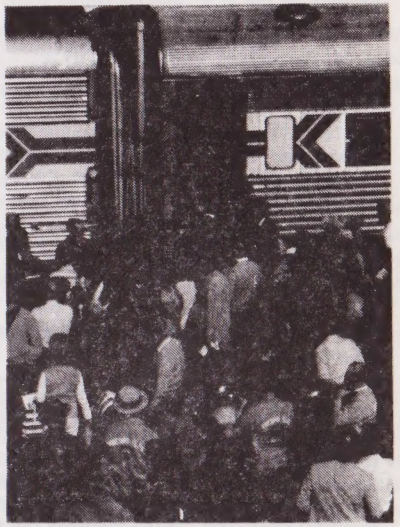
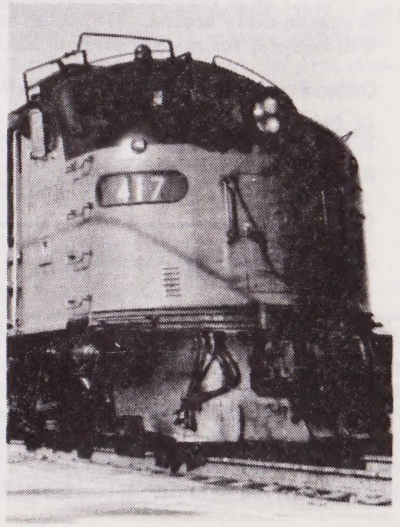
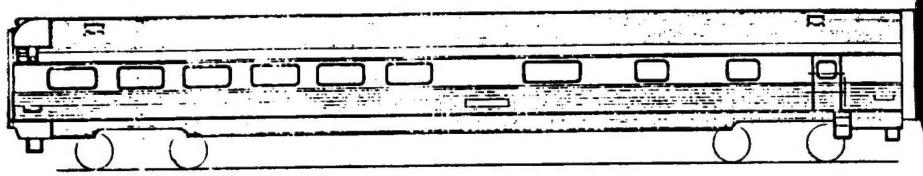




Announcing a New Book Covering Railway Passenger Cars:

RAILWAY PASSENGER CAR ANNUAL

Volume I - 1973-1974



Contains car by car rosters of all rail passenger cars in revenue service on the U. S. and Canadian Railroads and Transit Systems during 1973.

Each car is listed in numerical order under the owning railroad or Transit Authority for easy identification. Prior numbers, ownership, rebuilding, builder and date built is shown.

Includes all Intercity and Commuter passenger cars owned by: Alaska Railroad, Amtrak, Autoliner, Autotrain, Boston & Maine, British Columbia, Burlington Northern, Canadian National (Including GO Transit), Canadian Pacific, Central of New Jersey, Chessie System, The Milwaukee Road, Chicago & North Western, Rock Island, Chicago South Shore & South Bend, Denver & Rio Grande Western, Erie Lackawanna, Georgia, Illinois Central Gulf, Long Island, Norfolk & Western, Ontario Northland, Penn Central, Pennsylvania Reading Seashore Lines, Pittsburgh & Lake Erie, Reading, Southern, Southern Pacific, and Union Pacific. All Penn Central and Amtrak cars are cross indexed to prior numbers since they haven't been fully renumbered. Indicates cars owned by NJDOT, MTA, and SEPTA.

Includes all Rapid Transit and Streetcars owned by: MBTA (Boston), NYCTA (New York), SIRT (Staten Island), PATH (New York), TofNJ (Newark), PATCO (Philadelphia), SEPTA (Including Red Arrow), PAT (Pittsburgh), CTS (Cleveland), SHRT (Shaker Heights, Ohio), CTA (Chicago), NOPS (New Orleans), Leonard's Dept. Store (Ft. Worth), El Paso City Lines, BART, and San Francisco's MUNI (Including Cable Cars), MUCTC (Montreal), Expo Express, and the TTC (Toronto). Also includes the Seattle Alweg Monorail.

Be in the know about passenger cars in service. Small 9"x 6" size is easy to carry around. 144 pages, softbound, is priced at only $ 5.00 pp. Will be ready for mailing early in March.

Order From: RPC Publications, P. O. Box 211, Park Forest, Ill., 60466.

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Rail Travel Newsletter, Vol. 4, No. 5 (Whole No. 79), First Issue of March, 1974. Published twice monthly by Message Media, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley, California 94709. Subscription $7.00 per year; single copy 30¢ (vol. 1-3 25¢). STAFF: James Russell, Editor; Paul Rayton, Editor-at-Large; Kenneth Maylath, East Coast Correspondent; Peter Roehm, Northeastern Correspondent; Peter Putnam Bretz, Roving Correspondent; John Ferry, Midwestern Correspondent.
Scheduled mailing date for this issue: March 18, 1974.

ON THE COVER: See report on first runs of the SAN JOAQUIN, starting on page 10.

NARP CAMPAIGNS FOR NEW AMTRAK MANAGEMENT

As time nears for the administration to name a new Amtrak Board of Directors, the National Association of Railroad Passengers is mounting an intensive campaign for a new president of the rail corporation. The text of NARP's Feb. 27 press release:

"An appeal to both the White House and to every member of Congress was issued today in an effort to block re-appointment of Roger Lewis as president and chairman of Amtrak... Anthony Haswell, chairman of NARP, said the replacement of Lewis as Amtrak chief executive 'is the only answer to Amtrak's current malaise.' Mr. Haswell, in a letter to Jerry Jones, special assistant to President Nixon, and in letters to each Senator and Congressman, said Lewis should be replaced with someone committed to the goal of modern railroad passenger service and who has a background of solid achievement and experience in the railroad business.

"Haswell said that 'Amtrak ridership, spurred by the energy crisis, is running far ahead of last year, but Amtrak's performance in serving all these newly-rediscovered riders is something else.' Haswell noted that in 1971, Amtrak's first year, on-time performance was 75%. It dropped to 60% in 1973. He said long distance trains have the worst record, being on time only 30% of the time. 'Since Nov. 3, 1973, Amtrak passenger trains by law must be given priority over freight trains, but in November and December, 1973, there were 2,398 instances of delay to Amtrak trains due to freight train interference. To our knowledge, Amtrak has yet to appeal to the attorney general for assistance in enforcing the law. Time and time again, Amtrak has acquiesced in the obstructionist conduct of the railroads, including controversies over initial route selection, proposed service expansion, operation of special trains, and operation of dome equipment.'

In addition to poor on-time performance, Haswell cited frequent equipment failures; shortcomings in information, reservations and on-board services; and serious 'gaps' in the route structure. 'We believe that Amtrak's top management must bear primary responsibility for its poor performance,' he stated. This conclusion, Haswell said, is obvious, when Amtrak's shortcomings are considered. He added that Lewis had failed to seek replacement of Amtrak directors who are known to be opposed to the Amtrak concept; that Lewis has made no visible effort to fill a vacancy on the board for a consumer director; and that Lewis undertook legal action to obstruct and/or delay a new auto-on-train service from the Midwest to Florida (by Auto-Train--Ed.).

"'Lewis now claims that the delay in dealing with Amtrak's equipment problems is traceable to inadequate funding during Amtrak's first year. Yet in May, 1972, Lewis rejected an offer by members of the Senate Commerce Committee to provide additional funding for Amtrak over and above what had been requested by the Dept. of Transportation, because it was more than Amtrak could "sensibly" spend,' Haswell related.

"When President Nixon signed the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1973, he promised to take steps to improve Amtrak management.' Mr. Haswell concluded that NARP 'hopes and believes' the President will follow thru on this statement by declining to reappoint Lewis to the Amtrak board, and by appointing a new board which will select a qualified replacement for Lewis."

Initial reports are that the NARP campaign is receiving favorable attention on Capitol Hill. NARP's address is 417 New Jersey Avenue S.E., Washington DC 20003. The consumer organization is supported by member contributions.

AMTRAK TO LOSE "SUPER CHIEF" AND "TEXAS CHIEF" NAMES

John S. Reed, chairman of Santa Fe, in a letter to Amtrak's Roger Lewis early this month, rescinded Amtrak's permission to use the "Chief" names on its trains, a Santa Fe trademark. The reason was that Amtrak was preparing to split the SUPER CHIEF into two sections starting June 9, with what Reed felt was downgraded dining service which reflect unfavorably on the names closely identified with the Santa Fe.

Encore!

The Twentieth Century Railroad Club does it again with the "Third Annual Chicago Railfan Luncheon". A fantastic afternoon of informative entertainment for the rail passenger enthusiast, featuring AMTRAK's unpredictable Steve Kabala, Melvin F. Clemens, Jr. of Auto-Train, and CP's "Canadian". Don't miss out on the event of the Century. Send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Twentieth Century Railroad Club, Dept. R-1 10700 Seeley Ave., Chicago, IL 60643

There Is Nothing Like A Train.

Express Ads

CHESAPEAKE & OHIO Historical Newsletter is a must for anyone interested in the past or present operations of the C&O. Each month an average of 18 pages of text along with 6-10 half-tone photos are presented as well as additional photo pages and drawings, diagrams, etc. in special issues. Monthly column on modelling with a C&O prototype, historical section, and section on current news. Much coverage of C&O/AMTRAK operations and many stories from the history of C&O passenger service. $5.50 per year; free sample. C&O Historical Newsletter, 3 Admiral Blvd., Dundalk, Md. 21222.

Still Available! CHESAPEAKE & OHIO LIGHTWEIGHT PASSENGER EQUIPMENT, 1946-1972. A thirty-page booklet with 17 photos and 5 diagrams detailing the giant C&O passenger equipment order after World War II, including the Pere Marquette, Chessie and C&O equipment. Number by number history of each car, including AMTRAK numbers for those cars reaching its ownership. Complete cross-referenced index, background historical data, etc. This fine pamphlet by Herbert H. Harwood, Jr., is a must for any C&O fan or anyone interested in passenger equipment of the post-war era. $3.00 (printed on high quality gloss and pebble stock) postpaid. C&O Historical Society, 3 Admiral Blvd., Dundalk, Md. 21222.

RAILROAD TICKETS: Desire to trade current cash fare receipts, card and commutation tickets from New York area railroads for corresponding material from B&M, SP and Chicago area railroads. Walter Zullig, 79 Echo Lane, Larchmont, NY 10538

"RAILBUFFS IN AMTRAK!" New, startling book reveals inside story of railfans working within Amtrak, pressing for new trains all over the nation, contrary to the orderly progress that management desires! Wherever fine books are sold.

DISCOVER AMERICA WITH AMTRAK! This year, train your family at vacationtime. It's a valuable experience with Amtrak's money-saving family plan fares. For helpful vacation planning and reservations, write GREAT WESTERN TOURS, 639 Market St., San Francisco 94105, or call us at (415) 398-2994.

TRAVEL AMTRAK - and those living in Southern California CALL upon Let's Travel, be it a trip to San Diego or New York. Ride new San Joaquin Valley Service. Reserve early - quick tickets by mail - collect calls accepted for definite reservations. Let's Travel Tours, P O Box 146, Perris, CA 92370. (714)657-4785.

WANT TO REALLY DO SOMETHING TO HELP THE PASSENGER TRAIN? We've got just the answers for your problems: Naptras. What's Naptras? We're helping to make the trains worth traveling again, thru advertising, personal appearances, and by helping in financing rail passenger service thru Chambers of Commerce. Write Us: Naptras, Scott Rogers, Public Relations Officer, RR 3, Freeport, IL 61032. Remember, We're helping to make the trains worth traveling again.

A SPECIAL TURBO BUTTON!! Large 3" size, AMTRAK logo, and the wording, "The Turbos are Coming." Buy several to help tell people of the Corridor Turbine Trains. Postpaid sample $1, or 4 for $3, or 7 for $5, from Julie Ann Kreunen, 305 Yosemite Trail, Parkwood Hills, Madison, Wisc. 53705.

A SUPERPOWER PORTRAIT. 11 x 29 drawing of Pere Marquette Berkshire 1225. From ATS detector to crosshead nuts, no detail has been overlooked. On your wall for only $2.00. Proceeds go to rebuild 1225 for excursion service. MSU Railroad Club, MSU Museum, East Lansing, MI 48824.

MAKE PLANS to attend the National Association of Timetable Collectors second railroadiana BOURSE. Spend a day browsing among the many tables of timetables, hardware, calendars, books and everything of railroad interest. It will be held at the George Washington Motor Lodge, U.S.#1 and the Penna. Turnpike, Trevose, Pa., on April 20, from 9AM to 5PM. Tables available for those wishing to sell. For information and a descriptive flyer, send a card to Bob Russell, 2737 Haven Ave., Ocean City, N.J. 08226.

Railroad Uniform Buttons 50¢ each postpaid. Erie, Frisco, Georgia, Monon, Southern, Seaboard, Milwaukee, Reading, Central Vermont, Southern Pacific, Western Pacific, Santa Fe, Illinois Central, Jersey Central, Rock Island, and Washington and Old Dominion. J. Lajoie, 22 Stevens, Methuen, Mass. 01844

QUALITY B&W NEGATIVES: 35mm, 2¼x2¼, 616 negatives of many major lines, shortlines and industrials. All negs fine-grain processed. Cabs, switchers & pass. units. PC, SOU, NW, SP, BN, FP&E, D&R, GN&A, MRR, P&LE, WM, B&O, C&O, EL, L&S, E&M, KCS, P&S, C&I, etc. List & sample 50¢. T.N. Colbert, 1008 Englewood, Parma, OH 44134.

TWO NEW SLIDE SETS are now available from Northwest Rail Images: "Milwaukee Road Electrification in 1973" and "Four Canadian Railways," a look at passenger and freight subjects of the Ontario Northland, Algoma Central, Northern Alberta and British Columbia Railways. Each set is 25 duplicate slides for $6.00. Or send 25¢ for a sample slide and list of 16 sets to Northwest Rail Images, 4891 Donald Street, Eugene, Oregon 97405.

WANTED: Will purchase high quality Kodak original or duplicate 35mm color slides of Budd RDC's for my collection. Particular wants are Western Pacific, Long Island, Chesapeake and Ohio, Susquehanna, MKT, Chicago & North Western, Great Northern and M&StL cars. Am looking for New York Central M-497 with jet engine on roof, and B&M action views in the area of the Hoosac Tunnel, Mass. Robert L. Eastwood, Jr., P. O. Box 41, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006.

The SAN JOAQUIN's Valley press: What they read March 6 and 7 in station cities. $2½ to Robert J. Swan, Box 1866, Long Beach CA 90801. Mailed March 28.

OUT NORTHWEST ON THE RUPERT ROCKET

by Glenn Lee

"He does not know England who only England knows," Rudyard Kipling wrote. With these words in mind, I set out to learn more about the United States by touring in Canada during my two-year stay in Edmonton. By judiciously arranging compensation time and vacation days over the Dominion Day holiday (July 1) in 1971, I was able to make a round trip on that most wondrous of Western Canadian passenger trains, the "Rupert Rocket," as it has been affectionately known to its crews.

Railcruising to the British Columbia northwest began the afternoon of June 30 when I boarded the Canadian National SUPER CONTINENTAL Train No. 3, the Toronto section, for the trip west to Jasper, where I would change to CN Train No. 9 for an overnight and all-next-day ride to Terrace, B.C., some 94 miles short of the end of the continuous CN rail web that extends "clear across Canada."

Edmonton's beautiful CN station was awash with summer and holiday crowds, and No. 3 was long; with 21 cars in, and 19 out, including 4 coaches and 8 sleepers. I occupied roomette 3 in "Naiscoot River," a 10-6 lightweight sleeper which had begun life as the Florida East Coast's "Honduras." The train was packed, and I was appreciative of the privacy of the roomette. Dome car "Athabasca," an ex-Milwaukee Road full-length dome, was packed with vacationers most of the way.

Despite our late departure, No. 3 fared well on its 5-hour run to Jasper, and I arrived in plenty of time to explore in the small but growing mountain community. At the attractive block station, CN No. 9, the daily-in-summer Prince Rupert train, was waiting to load passengers, steam hissing quietly from "Trinity," the skyview (skytop when it was an American car) lounge-observation car. After watching the SUPER depart from the west end of the Jasper platform, I had sufficient time in the twilight to thoroughly check the consist of No. 9, which was: F units 6506-6504, heater car 15406; baggage-mail cars 9139-9094; dormitory "Valois" (ex-NYC 22-rmt sleeper 10418 "Humber Bay"); coaches 5307-5400; diner-lounge 1333, an 84-tonner built 1938; heavyweight sleeper "Jellicoe," built in 1923 and modernized in 1949; lightweight 8-4-4 sleeper "Egerton"; and at the rear, the skyview car "Trinity," which had been built in 1949 was Milwaukee Road 15 "Coffee Creek," and modernized in 1965 after acquisition by CN.

After grabbing a snack and prowling a few streets in the "downtown" area of Jasper, I returned to the depot before train loading time. The westbound SUPER CONTINENTAL from Montreal had left a good crowd of transferring passengers also, and these included a group of perhaps 30 French-speaking teenage girls, and the racket in the station might easily have resembled that of a busy stop on the Montreal Metro.

After being loaded by my courteous porter, I returned to the vestibule to catch last views of the craggy peaks behind Jasper outlined by the "midnight twilight" that reigns for two or three weeks each summer at the time of the longest days of the year. My attention was drawn to a middle-aged couple standing on the platform below me. They were Americans from Milwaukee. "You're really lucky to have a train like this," he said. "Did you know there is only one passenger train left in the whole state of Wisconsin?" she asked. This was only two months after A-Day, and I commiserated with the couple and encouraged them to keep a stiff upper lip, saying that things would soon be better, while privately fearing the worst for the train which was about to depart....

....with a gentle tug, and we were around the curve west of the depot, and underway with high spirits to climb the Yellowhead, and then turn northwest towards the orient on a path blazed by some very optimistic railroad builders.

Within a half mile of the depot, the skyview lounge was filled to overflowing with happy people. The 10pm departure hadn't put a crimp in anyone's social style that I could see. CN had added a small serving bar in the lounge sharing a wall with the last bedroom. This feature hadn't been present when

(continued on page 15)

AMTRAK'S RESERVATIONS SYSTEM CREATES WEST COAST PROBLEMS

With the February closing down of reservations offices in Seattle and San Francisco and centralization of facilities in Los Angeles, reports of problems in getting information and reservations have skyrocketed. A single toll-free number is now given for West Coast Amtrak numbers, but it appears that callers are finding it very difficult to get thru, especially with the increased energy crisis business. San Francisco columnist Herb Caen spoke critically of Amtrak's phones that are not answered. In Oakland there is no longer a recorded train arrival and departure number, and most passengers have no way of knowing if their train is on time. The only line thru to Oakland is the station manager's number, requiring an employee to check the train times personally, an inefficient process. When old numbers are phoned, an operator gives the caller the toll-free number instead, but the overtaxed L.A. office is not prepared to know the exact on-time data of all trains on the Coast. The new office has room for expansion, and apparently such expansion is already badly needed.

REPORTS OF AMTRAK TRAIN WRECKS

The SUNSET LIMITED derailed westbound at Dayton, TX on March 11, injuring 9 passengers, none seriously. Ten cars derailed: UP 1423 (deadheading), Amtrak 9951, 9959, 9916 (hi-level coaches), 3394 (dorm lounge), 8041 (diner), 2351, 2718, & 2685 (sleepers). The COAST STARLIGHT was in a wreck at Shedd, OR northbound March 6. An automobile struck an engine at a crossing, killing the 8-month pregnant woman driver and seriously injuring her two small sons. Two diesel units and 8 of 11 cars derailed but did not tip over. There were no reported injuries on the train. With the line blocked, passengers were bused in both directions. A stub train ran between Oakland and L.A. March 7, and on the return trip March 8 passengers were shifted to the regular train at Oakland. Amtrak has had to press much non-refurbished equipment into service on the STARLIGHT recently because of the number of cars damaged in wrecks.

AMTRAK'S BAD IMAGE ON THE TV NEWS

Amtrak got a bit of bad publicity on the NBC Nightly News March 8, with a film taken aboard the Chicago-Carbondale SHAWNEE. Main problem was lack of equipment. There was standing room only as the train reached Champaign and a large crowd boarded. The news said people were herded into baggage cars "without sanitary facilities" and they were obviously irate. The film was made March 3, a busy Sunday when only 4 or 5 coaches, instead of the usual 10, were being run. One woman, who had a seat, summed up the situation as follows: "The train is fine--if only there were more of it."

AMTRAK BOARD TAKES UP IMPORTANT MATTERS

The Amtrak Board met March 7, and among the matters considered was a possible 5% across-the-board fare increase this summer, on top of the 20% already programmed. A new contract with Penn Central has apparently been drawn up, and it includes an incentive plan which gives bonuses for on-time performance; it reportedly will be less expensive to the taxpayer than the ICC plan on fully allocated costs.

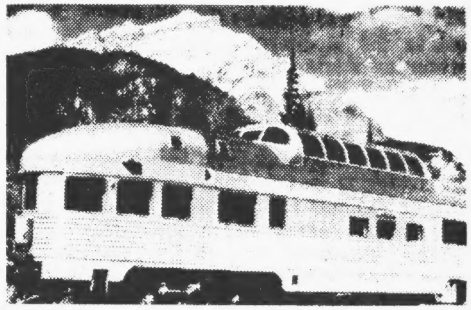
NEWS BRIEFS: San Francisco Muni Railway has been shut down well over a week by a strike of city workers. After some days, the BART line in S.F. was shut down also, and AC Transit drivers from the Eastbay honored picket lines for at least a day... Louis Klauder & Associates has been awarded a contract to design all-new passenger cars for Amtrak... The Chicago area is voting on a Regional Transit Authority on March 19; it's expected not to pass because it involves an added 5% gasoline tax... The COAST STARLIGHT will get new numbers May 19: train 11-12 becomes train 11 and train 13-14 becomes train 14... The SUNSET LIMITED continues tri-weekly this summer because of lack of equipment... Amtrak officials reportedly will decide this month whether to run a weekend L.A.-Las Vegas train, using SUNSET LTD equipment... Amtrak recently bought the 12 C&NW hi-level cars, and will number them in the 9600 series. The electrical systems are being changed from 440 to 220 volts... BLACK HAWK (#371) was hit by a pheasant at Seward, IL Feb. 25, breaking engineer's window. Windshield from second car served as replacement... NAT'L LTD detoured on ICG between Effingham & Mattoon and the ex-NYC line to Indianapolis late last month due to a freight derailment...

MIXED TRAIN OF THOUGHTS

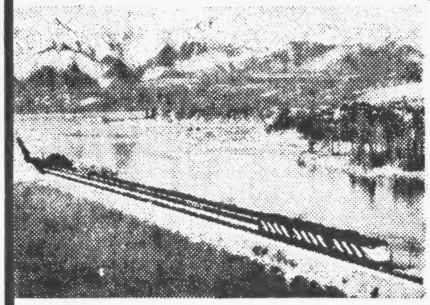
THE LAST ISSUE of RTN, scheduled for mailing Feb. 28, didn't make it because of an unfortunate combination of editorial virus and a last-minute press breakdown. One third of our copies got mailed March 1, the remainder March 4, for which we paid 10¢ each, even tho the imprint still read 8¢. Delivery was much slower than usual, presumably due to the glut of mailing just before the rate increase..... THE ILLINOIS ZEPHYR has been running a UP 48-seat diner the past 3 weeks as a study hall car for its college student patrons. Autoliner car "Linoma" is used for food service.... PORT HURON TRAIN is to get rolling in early May, using Grand Trunk heavyweight coaches being refurbished by Autoliner..... 25 ENCLOSED AUTORACK cars are to be built for Amtrak by Autoliner and Hamburg Industries, 10 by the former, 15 by the latter... THE LIBERTY LIMITED apparently will be Amtrak's name for its second train on the B'WAY LTD route. It will carry Rock Island sleepers being refurbished and renamed for cities along the route: "Windy City," "Wrigley Field," "Rock Creek," and "Potomac" among them. These are 8/6 sleepers recently purchased. The train is expected to start running June 14. Chicago departure time will be 6:45pm, with the B'WAY out at 2:30pm... THE FOUR EX-MILWAUKEE Road Super Domes owned by Amtrak (#9380-9383) are currently at Pullman-Standard in Chicago being fitted with high-density (110-psgr) coach seating, with presumably a lounge below. Two are in the shop, two waiting outside..... HERE'S MORE INFO on those additional cars just purchased by Amtrak, mentioned here before: they include 20 PC and 4 KCS baggage; 29 PC and 23 Milw coaches; 1 KCS diner; 2 PC diners; UP diner #4805; 8 PC parlor; UP lounge #6201; NP slumbercoach "Loch Long"; NP sleeper #372; KCS sleepers 44 & 45; B&O coaches 5506-7 & sleeper "Allegheny"; 6 CP diners; 5 CP round-end sleepers; PC sleepers "Middle River," "Union City," & "Aspen Falls"; Great Western Tours (ex-IC) sleeper "Angel Island" (Amtrak #2804); and Western Rwy of Alabama 10/6 sleeper "Alabama River"..... THE SUNDAY DEPARTURE of the STATE HOUSE from St. Louis was changed from 5 to 7am on Jan. 13 and a new Turbo timecard printed. Our John Ferry has a supply and will send you one for a 10¢ stamp. Address: 10041 S. Prairie Ave., Chicago IL 60628..... IT IS REPORTED that the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR schedule will be lengthened by 1hr 45min between Denver & Chicago in May because of poor timekeeping. Chicago departure will be 3:45pm and Chicago arrival 11:55am..... A TEST TRAIN ran on the ICG from Chicago to St. Louis March 11. The consist included Amtrak engine 419, hi-level coach and 2 DOT test cars. The United Aircraft Turbo that ran on that route for about 3 days took the place of the STATE HOUSE, and reportedly got a better reception by crews than the French jobs; the engineers liked the better protection in front of them. The train was bad-ordered on its last trip there, but is now in service in the Northeast Corridor..... CORRECT THAT TYPO here last issue: read "Missouri Pacific" for "Southern Pacific" in the report of 60mph speed limits for the INTER-AMERICAN. By the time you read this, the inaugural run of the extended INTER-AMERICAN will have come and gone. A new timecard for the St. Louis-Laredo train was out in advance, dated March 13 in a printing of 300,000. The train leaves St. Louis Su We & Fr at 3:15pm, arrives Laredo next day at 8:05pm; leaves Laredo Su Tu & Fr at 9:25am, arrives St. Louis 2:30pm next day ..... GREYHOUND HAS OBJECTED to the Amtrak-chartered bus running Bakersfield-Los Angeles to meet the new SAN JOAQUIN. The ICC issued Amtrak a 10-day permit to operate its own bus service, pending a hearing or decision. Newspaper and radio ads appearing in our area do not mention the Bakersfield-L.A. leg at all..... RADIO REPORTS EARLY this month indicated that a piece of metal, perhaps torn loose from the top of an Amtrak car, had pierced a dome car aboard a Milwaukee Road-operated Amtrak train near Winona, Wisc., injuring 2 passengers seriously enough to require hospitalization..... THE CALIFORNIA SENATE received a resolution March 7 asking Amtrak to reroute the COAST STARLIGHT thru Chico, Marysville, Roseville and Sacramento and to send the SAN JOAQUIN thru Sacramento..... AMTRAK HAS AGREED to initiate a stop at Orland, CA for the COAST STARLIGHTeffective next October. Northbound trains will stop at midnight, southbound at 3:30am. To toss sleepy passengers on or off.....

canadian news letter

UNITED STATES TOURISTS are being called north to Canada to ride trains in newspaper ads now appearing in the States. Canadian Pacific shows off its dome observation tail cars (below, right) in a CP Air ad featuring travel packages--the first such CP ad seen here in some time. CN is running ads that show the well-known SUPER CONTINENTAL photo seen below, with copy reading: "This year more than ever, you'll love a CN train tour in Canada. When you consider the increasing problems of other kinds of holidays, a Canadian National train vacation is truly the sensible alternative."



The CP ads may not be applicable for long, however, since reports have reached us that Amtrak is negotiating to purchase five of these round-end sleepers from CP in the NRPC's latest round of hunting up additional cars to fill the travel needs of a rapidly increasing number of train riders. Six diners are also on the list of cars wanted for purchase. The domes were built by the Budd Co., and are among a set of 18 such cars purchased by Canadian Pacific in 1954.



SOME TRAVEL TIPS from the author of the "Rupert Rocket" article in this issue: The "Rupert Rocket" provides a ride and a travel experience that most any rail buff or travel devotee will find exceptionally enjoyable and memorable. The subsequent discontinuance of sleeping car service west of Prince George is a loss, but passengers will find the scenery outstanding, and the company and service aboard most enjoyable. Those on a one-way trip from Jasper west to Prince Rupert can find both Alaska ferries and B.C. ferries to return south via either Vancouver Island or Seattle. Passengers backtracking to Prince George can avail themselves of tri-weekly RDC service south from Prince George to Vancouver. More adventurous passengers will take passage on the Prince George-McBride mixed train running east from Prince George. Altho the McBride mixed drops off the public timetable upon arrival at McBride, the equipment continues to Jasper, and adventurous souls who can talk fast might find themselves riding all the way to the Jasper freight yards in the ancient combine, rather than seeking bus connections or waiting for the early morning arrival of the eastbound "Rocket." In any respect, the Canadian lands are beautiful, and should encourage both relaxation and a sense of adventuring and increased awareness. Get your reservations soon!

WORLD'S TALLEST STRUCTURE will be the Canadian National Tower in Toronto, scheduled for completion early next year. Standing 1805 feet tall, the gray concrete structure will house communications equipment, and will also feature observations decks and a restaurant. Total cost of the tower is about $29.5 million.

THE SAN JOAQUIN RUNS!

by P. S. Supotco and E. F. Atnas*

Amtrak restored the passenger train to the San Joaquin Valley of California this month, after an absence of almost three years. Revenue runs in each direction between Oakland and Bakersfield (with bus connections Oakland-San Francisco and Bakersfield-Los Angeles) began March 6, and Amtrak provided an inaugural press run March 5, moving the equipment from Oakland to Bakersfield in the process. The SAN JOAQUIN (pronounced san wah-KEEN), trains 710 and 711, now is running daily, after special action by Congress to provide operating funds.

The big press run began at Oakland's 16th St. station on a foggy and fresh Tuesday morning. Newsmen and media personnel were all over the place. Red-coated Amtrak Reps scurrying here and there, officials standing in their little groups, and cameras, cameras, cameras. After the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR had pulled out came the announcement of the "SAN JOAQUIN DAYLIGHT"--wishful thinking for the complete run to Los Angeles, as in SP's pre-Amtrak days when trains 51 and 52 threaded their way thru the Tehachapi Mountains south of the Valley?

The festivities were to take place up at the engine. The lead unit was Amtrak 417, an ex-UP "E" unit, and trailing behind, Amtrak 410, a "B," its 4-wheel trucks spelling "F" unit. Many cameras were snapping already, and someone from channel 7 was hanging on the steps to the cab, interviewing the engineer. KTVU and KAJO were represented with newsreel cameras. Lots of TV equipment around.

Three Amtrak hostesses now line up next to the engine, each decked with flowers. Oh yes, now the bottle of champagne is ready. "Hey, don't break that champagne" a newsman calls out. No speech or anything, but a knot of photographers gathers in an instant and lenses are adjusted. Hesitation and waiting. Now the bottle is handed to a girl wearing the banner "Miss California." She aims the bottle at the bottom step of the cab and waits a moment. She seems unsure of herself. "O.K., somebody count." From off to the side: "One, two, three!" She swings the champagne and "clunks" it against the step. The bottle cracks but doesn't break. Snap, click, whirr. "Awwww." "Yaaah." "Hey, look at us." Shirr, click, snap. Clapping hands. "Do it again." A half-hearted attempt, but the liquid splashes out of the bottle and the deed is done. Now Miss California, wearing her "Tracks are Back" button, climbs up the steps and is handed an advertising card to be photographed showing it was Christian Brothers champagne that was used today. More photos and shots. Then the P.A. asks "all invited guests" to please board the train, and the ceremonies are over.

Each coach seat has a new train brochure--thick paper and nicely done, showing all connections and fares, etc. I'm reading this as we whistle off right on the nose at 10am. The train consists of 4 coaches; in the middle are 8114 lunch counter diner and 3820 coach-bar-lounge built in 1938 for the KANSAS CITYAN and CHICAGOAN of the Santa Fe. The latter is a vintage piece, what with its art nouveau overhead lamps and large rounded window lights. The car was the most popular one of the day, as Amtrak had provided free drinks for newsmen and officials.

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The lunch counter car did a roaring business dispensing complimentary lunch throughout the day. The entire counter was laid over with white tablecloths. Trays of delectable goodies piled high were served. Sandwiches for every taste, canapes, hors d'oeuvres, a large garnish bowl, chips, nuts, and more. The display was interspersed with flowers, and looked great.

We made a brief stop in Richmond to pick up a Santa Fe crew. They rode along with the SP crew to Port Chicago, where the changeover was made. We rolled along at a good speed and came to a stop at Martinez at 10:46am, 4 minutes ahead of schedule. I could see the stand set up, the folding chairs, the waiting crowd, cameras, a band, all ready to greet us.

The sun had burnt off the fog now and it was pleasant to stroll in the lovely bayside setting of Martinez. Big green hills roll right down to the tracks. The water is a short walk away. Restaurants and stores are all close by. A new waterfront park is being planned.

Our train was about 2/3 full, and all got out here on the first regularly scheduled passenger train stop since May 1971. The speeches commenced: "...let me introduce to you the honorable..." "We welcome Amtrak to our fair city, a service of great value..." "..keenly anticipating filling your trains..." "Thank you, Mayor...We at Amtrak are pleased to be providing the much-needed service to this wonderful community." Clap clap clap. And so forth. Someone mentioned that Martinez would become the transfer point for transcontinental trains later this spring. An Associated Press photographer, Mike Pechner, removed the little sign that said "..no trains stop here anymore," explaining that he was also a railfan. Toot toot, and away at 11:02.

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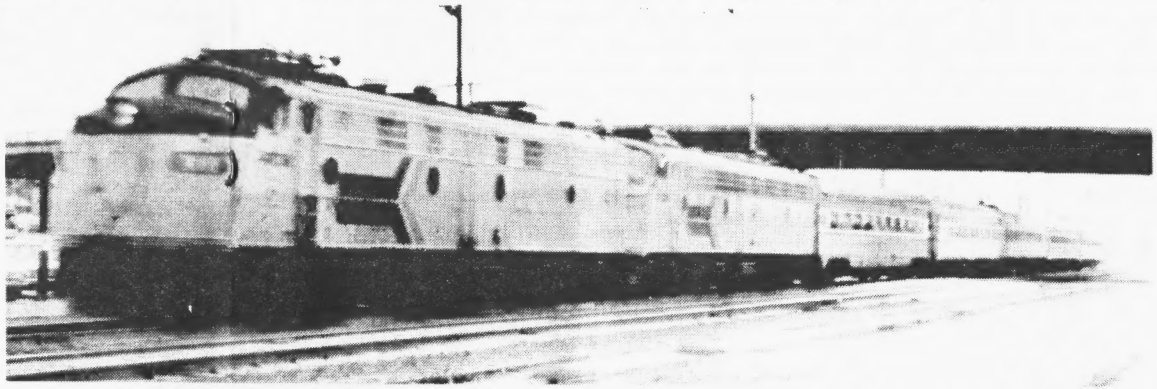

STREAKING THROUGH BERKELEY comes the first southbound revenue run of the SAN JOAQUIN on March 6, reaching the big open space between University and Hearst Avenues at 10:06, a new unofficial record for fast running from Oakland, as photographer Ted Nelson exposed his film to 1/125 second, barely catching the fast-moving Amtrak units.

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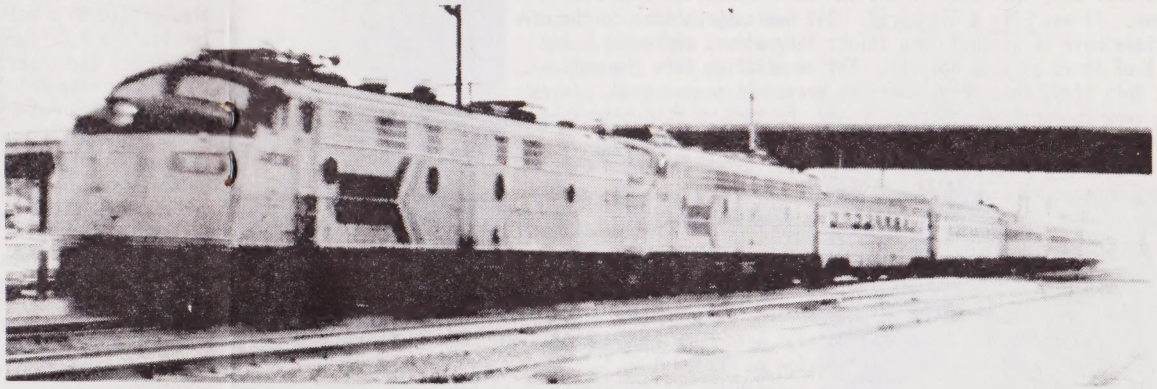

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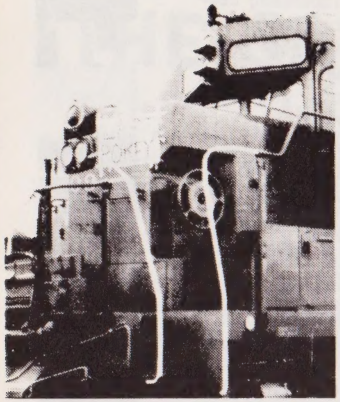


Apr. 30, 1971: last SP SAN JOAQUIN DAYLIGHT, #51, affectionately dubbed "Last Pokey." At right, first Amtrak #710 March 5, 1973. Photos by Message Media.

Amtrak-mandated operation. Finally, with a sigh of something like relief, we realized we were solidly on the tracks of the friendly Santa Fe.

A mile or two later, the Santa Fe rails crossed over the SP on a viaduct and we were back close to the river again, with the Sacramento Northern making a third parallel railroad. At 12:28 we reached the freshly painted (white and black) Stockton Santa Fe station, where a good crowd was down to greet the train in the middle of a working day. Most of the Bay Area newsmen detrained here and rode an Amtrak courtesy bus back. (Tho the buses were newish and clean, the trip back along paralleling highway 4, nicknamed "Blood Alley," was a real bummer, and the best ad for trains Amtrak could have devised.)

Leaving Stockton, I checked whether there was a physical connection between the Santa Fe crossover and the SP's Sacramento line. Yes, it is possible to move the passenger train onto the SP at this point for use down the valley if Santa Fe has any track problems.

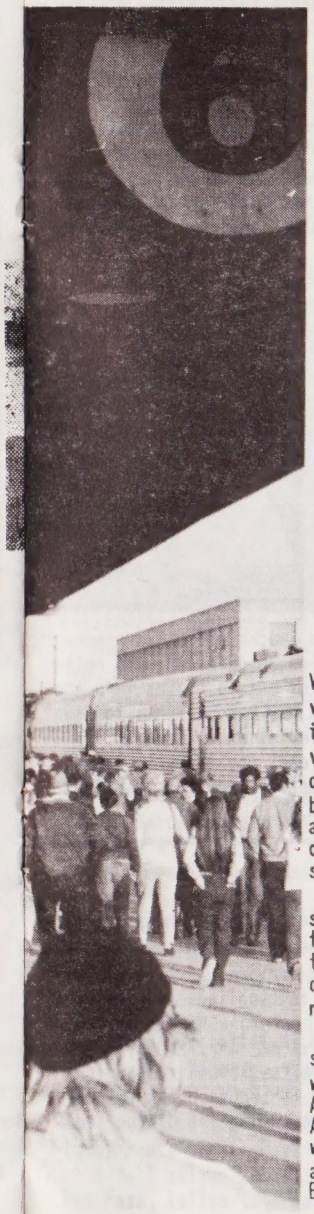
As the train sped on--top speed 70mph--I noted that everything was going like clockwork. And as we stopped at towns during the day, a pattern developed among the press crews and the Amtrak officials. Drinks would be procured, conversations, billows of cigarette smoke, laughter, another round of drinks. Maybe a quick trip to try a sandwich from the lunch counter car. Then we would slow for another station stop. "O.K., everybody--let's get to work." And the press corps would get their gear in order, and the Amtrak officials would get their thoughts in order. The train would stop, all would debark and go to work. Amtrak would listen to and make speeches. Then the whistle would toot, all aboard, we'd pull out, then back to the bar car for the start of another round. It was like a big party. But how many parties do the officials have to attend? One thinks they attend endlessly. And most of it is so much hot air. Yet we still go thru the motions. But this time, this trip, everyone seemed in a good mood. Amtrak was very cooperative with the press. Ed Edel, V.P.-Public Relations, was aboard and granted interviews. Dave Watts came by again to "make sure you report our wonderful on-time performance." Bruce Heard, whose face adorns the SAN JOAQUIN timetable, talked about scheduling and equipment. Others talked about their Amtrak departments.

The crowds along the line were impressive. Riverbank was the best with an estimate of over 300 people. The Rio Alturas 2nd Grade school kids were holding long banners which read "Welcome Amtrak to the City of Action," "Riverbank Welcomes Amtrak," "Hello Amtrak," and similar greetings. A welcoming sign also hung from the station. The Riverbank High School Bank played still another version of "Proud Mary." Sounds good, but (ha ha) why didn't some P.R. man go to each town beforehand and distribute sheet music for the "Amtrak March" or some such? Maybe next time.

Toot toot, back on again and the party continued, more mellow as time passed. I overheard a Santa Fe official talking to the engineer by portable radio. He was complaining about the "toot toot's" of the whistle--wanting longer, continuous blasts so everybody

could hear better thru the noise of welcoming. Riverbank gave us the most enthusiastic crowd, and the Riverbank Cheese Co. delivered about a dozen large trays filled with tasty bite-sized pats of cheese. Other towns presented Amtrak with a basket of fruit and two bottles of local wine. The Santa Fe roadbed was very smooth all along the valley floor, with no jolting around the curves.

At Merced the crowd was estimated at 200. Here is where travelers from all over North America will meet the bus connection to Yosemite. At this season there is one bus daily, leaving the Amtrak station at 3pm and reaching Yosemite Lodge at 5:30. The train reaches here from the north at 1:25pm, and from the south at 2:40pm. This bus schedule may change May 1, as the timetable notes. At present the return connection from Yosemite to the Bay Area is awkward, requiring a 3hr 10min wait in Merced, time better spent in the Park instead of leaving it at 9am.



Fresno's crowd of 150 heard the Fresno Elks play "Happy Days are Here Again" for the train's arrival. Hanford gave much enthusiasm with about 100 people and "I've Been Working on the Railroad" music. All station buildings sported new Amtrak signs.

We maintained schedule all down the line, arriving at Bakersfield on time at 5:55pm, which pleased Mr. Watts very much (bear in mind that the inaugural train ran on a schedule different from the timetable, to allow time for ceremonies). The crowd was 200 plus at Bakersfield. Again, speeches: "... Amtrak, a combination of all good railroads..." clap, clap, clap. "...If Amtrak were to pass a resolution this afternoon, ours would be one of thanks and enthusiasm for the trip we've had today... We look forward to offering service to Bakersfield for a long time to come." Amtrak invited the crowd to visit thru the cars before they were moved for servicing. Amtrak girls passed out plastic litter bags and balloons with the Amtrak logo to everyone as souvenirs, as they had done at the other stops. The Bakersfield High School Pep Band rounded out the music for the day.

All in all, things did seem to go without a hitch as far as train operation and service went. Amtrak even provided a bus to Los Angeles for those not staying to ride the first regular run back the next day.

What kind of a day was it? Very successful from Amtrak's viewpoint, I would say, unique and enjoyable from my vantagepoint. The party was over; we of the press had been treated with respect and friendliness. But my clothes reeked of cigarette smoke.

Back in the Bay Area, RTN staffers watched the TV news that night for coverage. Nothing. Maybe it was held over till Wednesday. Still nothing. Did we miss it?

Then Saturday in a drug store our ears pricked up when the radio went into an Amtrak jingle ("Easy does it, Amtrak does it. Take it easy with Amtrak"). And there was an ad for the new service to Bakersfield. Good.

ON THE COVER: Miss California shakes hands with the engineer before the inaugural press run of the SAN JOAQUIN on March 5 gets underway (u.l.); the crowd at Merced, California, come to view the inaugural train (u.r.); trays of delectable snacks awaited the press in Amtrak's lunch counter diner car on the inaugural run (l.l.); the first SAN JOAQUIN makes its first stop at Martinez, California on March 5 (l.r.). Photos by Peter Putnam Bretz and by Message Media.

CONSISTS OF THE FIRST SAN JOAQUINS: Consist of 3/5 press train and of first northbound #711 of 3/6: Amtrak diesels 417 & 410; Amtrak coaches 5227 & 5230; Amtrak 8114 lunch counter diner; Amtrak 3820 coach-bar-lounge; Amtrak coaches 4480 & 4481 (all ex-ATSF). Consist of first southbound #710 of 3/6: Amtrak diesels 418 & 429; Amtrak coaches 5236 & 5228; Amtrak 8100 lunch counter diner; Amtrak coaches 4892 & 4495 (all ex-ATSF except 4892, ex-NP).

Finally, a historical note, and perhaps a hope for the future. Under SP operation, the SAN JOAQUIN DAYLIGHT (actually referred to as the "SAN JOAQUIN" by railfans), ran all the way from Oakland to Los Angeles, thru the Tehachapi Mountains and around the famous Tehachapi Loop. Should this rail segment be restored, passengers would be exposed to scenery such as that in the photo below, taken by Peter Bretz near Bealville in the Tehachapis

just five years ago, on March 17, 1969. SP and Santa Fe share tracks thru these mountains, and when talk arose 2 or 3 years ago of restoring the San Joaquin run, the railroad reaction immediately was that "Santa Fe is running a lot of potato trains thru the mountains, and passenger trains would interfere." In what has now become known to some as the "Potato Train Incident," the rail run has been terminated at Bakersfield, with a bus continuing south on a journey faster than the train. At least now there is the option of a second S.F.-L.A. train making the trip 55 minutes faster, and, for the night people among us, leaving at the more civilized hour of 10:00am.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"...the quality of service provided by Amtrak no longer reflects credit on Santa Fe... We feel passenger discomfort that will inevitably result in the summer season from the operations now proposed will seriously damage a symbol of good service which is closely identified in the public mind with the name Chief and various combinations thereof, most especially the Super Chief."

--Santa Fe Chairman John S. Reed in letter to Amtrak's Roger Lewis March 7 in which he revoked Amtrak's right to the use of "Chief" names in SUPER CHIEF and TEXAS CHIEF because of proposed "downgrading" of dining service on the SUPER CHIEF.

(continued from page 6)

the cars had worked on the old OLYMPIAN HIAWATHA, but it added a great intimacy that encouraged people to talk. CN's complimentary pretzels were everywhere, and it was much fun checking the happy crowd in one direction, and the track receding from us in the other, under the steel-grey twilight that refused to fade, shaping and painting the mountains of the Yellowhead in striking dark colours.

The combination bartender-porter was one of many similar young men making their way thru university by working summers on CN sleepers. Our steward was obviously his fraternity's rushing chairman during the year, and he dispensed wit and camaraderie with the drinks.

The skytops had acquired a reputation for smooth riding on the Milwaukee. "Trinity" continued the good work, doing very little "crack-the-whip" bobbing as we rolled west. The "Rocket" twisted and turned up to the Yellowhead summit, then picked up speed as we dropped down the easy grades of the west wide toward Fraser Lake, which seemed slightly luminescent as we curved along its northern shore. From Edmonton west, the old Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific, two CN predecessors, each constructed separate railway lines, in many cases only a few hundred feet apart. In the Yellowhead, they were even closer; but one came to an early end--torn up for scrap to fuel World War I as far west as Red Pass Junction, 44 miles west of Jasper. I stayed up to check the stop here, at the depot immediately after passing thru the junction. From Red Pass the old Grand Trunk Pacific headed northwest by descending a steep grade into the Rocky Mountain trench at the foot of Mt. Robson, our route to Prince Rupert. The Canadian Northern, now the CN main line to Vancouver, kept at higher elevation, seeking an easier grade into the trench heading in the opposite direction--southward to seek the headwaters of the Thompson River and from there, a water-level route to the Pacific.

I fell asleep soon after leaving Red Pass, lulled to dreamland by smooth-riding equipment and the tranquilizing effect of good service and good company, and the night remained undisturbed until we arrived Prince George, B.C. on time at 6:20.

"PRINCE GEORGE--40 MINUTES IN PRINCE GEORGE" screamed the porter passing thru the sleeping car; and in my pre-awakening moments he seemed to be banging on doors and heaving bricks. He repeated his "Prince George" announcement a second time, and I thought: "Here is a man practicing for a part in Dante, probably announcing the ferries crossing the River Styx." I remained determined not to wake up, but it was no use. The service crew outside was running the porter a close second for noise pollution, and I dressed slowly while the train remained in the depot. Upon leaving, I noted that Prince George is now getting to be a big place--with a "skyscraper" downtown to boot.

At Prince George, the group of French-speaking young ladies detrained; and as we pulled away, we could see them boarding a bus. The conductor said they were going to spend a few weeks on a ranch at Quesnel, south of Prince George, as a part of a privately financed program to help bring young people from both language groups together. A tiny, yet very visible effort that some Canadians are making to help keep their country held together.

Soon I went to the dining-lounge car, and was served with an adequate breakfast. CN breakfasts these last several years have been the weakest part of the dining service, and on the Rocket they were no exception.

Retiring to the skyview lounge car again, I renewed my acquaintance with this most wondrous of observations. I had previously ridden these cars on the OLYMPIAN HIAWATHA Seattle-Spokane; and on the Afternoon Rapido Montreal-Toronto, but in the clear, summery weather of northern British Columbia, the skyview seemed simply unbeatable. The attendant was cheerful and talkative, at once a disciple of Perle

Mesta and Dale Carnegie. Soon we were talking trains. He lived in Vancouver, but either stayed at or commuted regularly to Jasper to work the "Rocket," as all the crews call Nos. 9-10. It was somewhat of a pain to be working so far from home, he said, but it was worth it. In contrast, working on the "main line" (the SUPERS) was a backbreaking struggle some days, with sometimes edgy tourists and CN company "service inspectors" to deal with. The "Rocket" had very little pressure, and it was almost unheard of to have an inspector visit, he said. And he loved it. You could see it easily in the way he served and chatted with his passengers.

As the day wore on, we rolled along on relatively smooth track. Speeds are low because of curvature, and also because of the lack of block signals. The farther west from Prince George the train proceeds, the better the scenery. If it isn't long blue lakes on one side of the track, it's wide open vistas on the other. I began recuperating from many months cooped up in a small office, and for the first time in 8 years, felt a complete loosening of the muscles. The westward trek was serving as a tranquilizer. The last time I had felt so good on a train ride was in 1963 on a narrow gauge excursion between Alamosa and Durango on the now-abandoned Rio Grande system. As we chugged west thru Arboles and Ignacio in southwest Colorado, I had been almost overcome by the great distances, lack of population, wonderful train, and good company. A rare feeling, almost impossible to duplicate anymore, and I felt inspired to have the rare train feeling return once again.

As the train moved closer to the tallest mountains of the coast range in mid-afternoon, the skies darkened with rain clouds, and the day became grey. But the mood was offset by the increasing prominence of the peaks. Beyond Smithers, the mid-point servicing spot between Prince George and Prince Rupert, the rains began. The crew began describing the Bulkley Gate, a narrow canyon pierced by the "Rocket" to reach the basin of the Skeena River. Quickly the mountains enfolded the nine-car train, and we were crawling over tall, spidery trestles and into dark forests, smothered by rain. Then, into the Bulkley Canyon zone we slowly rolled. Down below, the churning river literally "turned on its side" to slide angrily thru the cleft. At trackside I noticed a "viewpoint," constructed by the railroad to allow passengers a chance to view the scene at their leisure after stopping. Southern Pacific has a similar unused viewpoint at Cape Horn curve above the American River Canyon east of Colfax, California, leaving perhaps the CN with its famous Mount Robson viewpoint the only one left in operation (now that the ROYAL GORGE is gone)--trains in recent years have stopped five minutes to allow a relaxed view of the tallest mountain in the Rockies from CN's main line. However, much as I wanted to stop, the "Rocket" rolled by slowly, allowing only a few fleeting glimpses of the unharnessed acre-feet parading below in grand splendor.

West from Bulkley Gate, the environment changes rapidly, and soon the "Rocket" was at New Hazleton, built high above the old steamboat community on the river below. Several minutes later we rolled out onto the great Skeena River Bridge, the principal structure of the Prince Rupert line. This mammoth engineering feat is acknowledged as having sounded the death knell of Skeena River steamboating when completed about 1915. There is a short stretch of heavy grade west from the high bridge down to water level, and the old helper "wye" can be seen at the top (east end) of the grade.

Once down to water level, it is easy to see why the Skeena is sometimes called the "River of Death," as many drown in its swift, muddy boils each year. The sun has reappeared, and it is one scenic delight after another as the afternoon rolls on. Across the river, above the south bank, tower great peaks shouldering snow fields and perhaps true glaciers. Those familiar with steamboat history can note treacherous narrows in the Skeena where steamboats could not maintain their upstream way, but were forced to "winch" themselves up the chutes where the current was too strong for paddlewheels alone. At picturesque Cedarvale, an operating cable ferry, powered by the river's current, is ferrying late model autos to the main highway on the opposite bank.

Around a bend and under the Kitimat Highway bridge, and we are at Terrace, 24 hours from Edmonton, and I am most happy to be alive and traveling. My destination was the Lakelse Hot Springs 15 miles south, and soon I was met by a van from the resort. The Finns have an expression that "if the sauna cannot help it, there is no cure." I'd amend that slightly to read "hot springs"; and I am sure others would too if they could stay at Lakelse. Quiet, good food, excellent accommodations, and lots of glorious hot water....

The return began with the Lakelse resort van carrying several passengers to CN's attractive Terrace station; some for "Rupert," and a few, including myself, for Jasper. The day could not have been more attractive, with fluffy white clouds rolling across bright blue skies. A mild wind was fluttering birch, aspen and cottonwood leaves for many miles up the Skeena.

Another fine-looking set of "Rocket" equipment was rolling east, including engine units 9003, 6505; heater car 15401; head-end cars 9264, 9106; dorm "Valcourt," ex-NYC 22-rmt sleeper 10430 "Gardiners Bay"; diner-lounge 1330; heavyweight sleeper "Windsor"; lightweight sleeper 8-4-4 "Endeavour"; and skyview observation "Baddeck," formerly 17 "Marble Creek" on the Milwaukee Road.

Across from me at lunch was a slender, nervous man in his 20s, en route east from Prince Rupert to rejoin his family in Montreal, a 5-day, 3-night ride on CN. His parents were in their 60s, and he was anxious to leave Quebec for good. This was eight months after the "October Crisis" in 1970, when Separatist terrorists had assassinated the Quebec Labour minister, and kidnapped the British trade consul. The young man's parents owned a jewelry store, and he felt both the store and the family home would be "taken" by the Separatists if Quebec seceeded from Canada. He planned to take a permanent job in "Rupert" as soon as he could swing it.

The eastbound run was much less patronized than the westbound run had been, and many of the "Rocket" passengers fell into a relaxed torpor, and the conversation was slow and mild. Soon we were at the grade ascending to Skeena Crossing, and I marveled once again at the boiling river, perhaps 150-200 feet below the bridge. To the south, the great peak Rocheur de Brule, named for an early French explorer, loomed overhead. Today, less grandly, it is known to the locals as "Roger, the Bull," the most prominent landmark in the area noted for the richness of its contemporary totem-pole building Indian culture.

Five miles east, as on my westbound trip, we passed the opposite "Rocket" at Carnaby Siding. All vestibules and kitchen service doors were open as troops of red-jacketed CN employees cheered their opposites. My own railroad-buff hands, more skillful than ever, were able to take both colour and black-and-white photos, and also take the consist as No. 9 passed. The westbound run was the same set I had come west on, swollen by the addition of sleepers "Ecum Secum River" and "Mount Fitzwilliam" ahead of skyview "Trinity." The "Ecum Secum" had begun life as the FEC "Brazil," and with the "Fitzwilliam," was on a tour movement.

As on the westbound run, the crew was courteous and attentive. The brakeman, due off at Smithers, said that there had been rumours that the Rupert line would receive block signals, and perhaps even CTC, as part of a large-scale upgrading to carry new unit trains, and also wheat, to a new Prince Rupert terminal. "Well, I've heard that as long as I've worked here, he said, and that's been almost 30 years, so we'll believe it when we see it."

It began raining after the service stop at Smithers, and I retired to the skyview car once again. Here I met one of CN's occasional PC-like crew members, perhaps the most unpleasant one of all. This brakeman was a noisy, "I'm all right, Jack,"

poor-mouther. "No reason to run these passengers anymore. Everyone should fly or drive. These trains just block the freight." He didn't like Americans either: "shouldn't be allowed up here for more than two weeks at a time." He didn't like the fact that I was working in Edmonton: "You're just keeping some Canadian out of work, you know." I suggested that there were more Canadians living in Los Angeles than there were in all of Canada, but that "didn't matter." I finally had to tell the brakeman it was none of his business how much I earned working in Edmonton.

This had taken place shortly after I had discussed with the skyview car's young attendant my belief that Amtrak (a big topic with the crews that week) would not work well until all train crews belonged to Amtrak--engineer, brakeman and all. The attendant had protested that most CN men he knew could do well at both passenger and freight, but as I left the car following the sour discussion, our eyes met straight on, and I could see: "by golly, you were right!" written widely on his face.

The remainder of the lush afternoon flowed swiftly into evening, and we were in Prince George at 9:20pm, darkness falling earlier than usual because of a light rain. I prowled the almost deserted depot at Prince George, wanting to wrap myself as heavily as possible with "train feeling." Finally, a quiet departure, and I turned to my roomette in "Endeavour." The car was overdo for a trip thru the shops, with loose window-shade wires folding out into the room, a dirty rug, and loose items and bolts here and there. These were of minor nuisance, and before turning in, I instructed the Travel Me to watch thru the night for two items: 1) passage of the westbound "Rocket," due 2-3am, and 2) Mt. Robson, due early in the morning, about 6am if we were on time.

About 2:30am I awoke with a start. Only seconds later the westbound "Rocket" rolled by on my side, and I was able to catch the name of the rear skyview car: It was "Malpeque." This accounted for the three skyview cars on the "Rocket," summer, 1971; and I thus knew the names of the three assigned to the CHALEUR on the Montreal-Gaspe run: "Mahone," "Fundy," and "Gaspe." I felt superior and content; and dropped right back to sleep. At 6am sharp I awoke suddenly, threw up the shade, and Travel Me had scored again: There was Mount Robson, stunning in the dawn's early light, her summit covered by a light cloud bank. A haunting, humbling, penetrating sight of the tallest peak in the Canadian Rockies, ironically adjacent to the lowest pass crossing the Rockies.

It was uphill slowly to Red Pass Junction, then a devilishly fast ride over the Yellowhead Summit, and we were rounding the bend into Jasper's magnificent station before I knew it. A quiet, end-with-a-whimper termination of a great trip. Jasper was cold, with snow threatening, even in early July. At the lodge's courtesy van, I heard one husband saying sarcastically: "Isn't this July? I thought we usually had summer in July! Well, we're not taking any trip to any Icefields today, dear" and she looked on sadly, resignedly.

I watched the Montreal section of the SUPER CONTINENTAL come and go, thru the cold wind; then settled down for a slow breakfast and some prowling around town, and the CN coach yard and engine terminal. Then the eastbound Toronto section came, and I was rolling home to Edmonton, again on a 19-car heavy train, exhibiting all the pressures of "working the main line" that the crews on the "Rocket" go out of their way to avoid. I'm hoping that as long as the "Rocket" runs, we'll always be able to tell which is which.

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